

The Best Estate.

Art thou thine own heart's conqueror?
Strive ever thus to be;
That is the fight that is most sore,
The noblest victory.

Art thou beloved by one true heart?
Oh prize it! it is rare;
There are so many in the mart,
So many false and fair.

Art thou alone? Oh say not so!
The world is full, be sure;
There is so much of want and woe,
So much that thou canst cure.

Art thou in poverty thyself?
Thou still canst help a friend;
Kind words are more than any pelf,
Good deeds need never end.

Art thou content in youth or age?
Then let who will, be great;
Thou hast the noblest heritage,
Thou hast the best estate!

—CASSELL'S FAMILY MAGAZINE.

Liberty of Conscience.

BY J. H. WORST.

The effete autocracies of the east afford a striking illustration of human wisdom. Once so compatible with the wants of the governed, now rent with nihilistic and communistic organizations.

The old world is little else than a huge military camp where laws are enforced directly or indirectly with the bayonet. The arbitrary powers conferred upon kings, monarchs, lords, and dukes; and that found such ready acquiescence from the people, but a few years ago, now chafe harshly upon the ideas of classes. Loyalty is only wrung out of even the meanest subjects with an iron hand.

Gradually, but surely the Gibraltar of monarchy is crumbling beneath the giant strokes of freedom. Greece gave freedom birth; Rome fondled, the nursing and gave its swaddling clothes; Switzerland rocked its cradle; and America nursed it into the giant of the ages, and all nations are preparing to burn incense to its overshadowing majesty.

The time is not far distant when God can be worshiped without fear or hindrance in every nation on the globe.

But few realize the beginning of this grand consummation. But few among us have ever taken the pains to ransack history, or felt the heart swell with gratitude for the heroic utterances that wrested this liberty from beneath the heel of tyranny. The first declaration of liberty of conscience ever adopted in Europe or America, was two hundred and thirty-eight years ago, when Roger Williams purchased Providence Plantation and gave his people "laws guaranteeing freedom of faith and worship to all."

Even though our Puritan fathers fled Europe to escape the persecution that raged against them, in turn, when quietly domiciled in the new world, and while their own hearts yet bore the unhealed stripes of religious intolerance, became themselves the most bigotted and cruel persecutors of their brethren that ever blackened the pages of history.

Roger Williams, one of their number, for enunciating the doctrine that "the civil power had no right to interfere with the religious opinions of men" was driven from his home in the dead of winter to perish.

Eloquent, pious, virtuous, yet because he dared to teach that "each person should think for himself in all religious matters, and be responsible to his own conscience alone,"—for this, his abandonment. But Canonicus and his savage tribe, *heathens* in the true sense of the word, but with humanity a thousand times more grandly developed than their bigoted, religious neighbors, took the outcast in, and fed, clothed, and sheltered Roger Williams, the stranger, as Christ commands. It seems strange that these untutored sons of the forest should have an inherent sense of Christian duty more strongly developed than those who professed to reverence the Savior of men.

But such is history. A bigoted, religious zeal will blind, and sink men lower than the savage, when their Christian (?) fury is arrayed against those who dare to gainsay their priestly mandates.

God, in some inscrutable way, has chosen very weak instruments to develop and sustain the right against majorities, and at the same time expose the internal corruption and hideous deformity of those same majorities that aggregate into them-

selves greater wisdom and power than the Christ they pretend to worship.

But liberty can never die. The people are sovereign and God so intended it.

The edict of 1647 will yet crystalize itself into the bosom of humanity, and the important part played in the tragic drama by the "heathen" chief will not detract from the glorious gem of religious liberty.

The leading element may never love its place and name, but its power will break whenever it strikes the brow of intelligence and progress.

England is leading the nations of Europe in encouraging the sovereignty of the individual—forced to do so by the contingency of the times, and it is only a question of time until her "franchise bill will yield to still more enlightened political measures, and ere long the last impediment of human liberty will be removed. The nations everywhere will recognize the rights of all men to worship God according to the dictates of conscience, and any constitution—political or ecclesiastical—that assumes to enslave opinion, will be branded as the enemy of God and humanity.

When the dread of usurped power is forgotten, then the unfettered powers of the church will gently unite against evil instead of foster it. The warfare will be as gentle, yet potent, as Christ the Nazarene wielded against the iniquities of darkness. Truth can only triumph ultimately by instilling the beauties of holiness throughout the wilderness of sin, as the gentle dew is distilled from heaven upon flower and weed alike.

But as long as men fear their rulers, and the church wages an internecine war for supremacy of dogmas and mandates, evil will fatten unmolested at the very gates and within the temple of the church.

God has decreed a millenium, and even now the impediments are crumbling and all exposing fabrics are trembling before the fall. When men learn to fear and obey none but God, and recognize his law as supreme, and obey its ritual from the heart, then the queen of the morning will cry from her peaceful throne—"Alleluiah!"

Day of the Lord.

BY JOSEPH BAUMAN.

I have had much thought in regard to the great day of the Lord. Are you ready for that day? If not, think for a moment; you are standing on slippery ground; you are in danger of losing eternal life. Let me entreat you to get ready by coming to Christ, that you may be pardoned, justified, and made ready for his kingdom. Come by being baptized into each name for the remission of sins. (Matt. 28:19.) And have your bodies washed with pure water. I entreat you to accept Christ on the easy terms of the Gospel. Don't wait till you are better; come just as you are. You can never get better by staying away from Christ. Make up your mind at once, and take him at his word. For as many as have been baptized into Christ, have put on Christ. (Gal. 3:27.) This is God's way to put on Christ. Will you have His way and live, or do you prefer the inventions of men, and die? Christ came to save sinners. You may say, "I don't feel like coming." You are not told to come by feeling, but come believing. (Rom 5:1.) It is Christ that saves; yes, but says one, I am not ready yet; I am too great a sinner; I have not prayed enough. Let me tell you this is a delusion from Satan. God is able to save you without any of your good works. Jesus paid the debt; look to him for salvation. Oh, may God enable you to see your folly of waiting till you are better! May he give you faith to come now, accept Christ, and cast in thy lot with the people of God. When we look at the love of God, we should feel to make some sacrifice and leave the pleasures of this world behind.

Dear brethren and sisters, we that have purified our souls by obeying the truth, are commanded to live faithful and work for God. Our walk and conversation must be such as becometh the true saints of our blessed Lord and Master. We are to be living witnesses for Jesus; our lamps trimmed and burning for the glorious appearance of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ.

Brethren, time is too precious to be slumbering. There is a great work before us to be accomplished by us, for we want to be ready when Jesus comes. I, for one, do not feel to sacrifice truth in order to please men.

Other foundation can no man lay than that is laid which is Jesus Christ. (1 Cor. 3:11.) Then let us take Christ at his word; observe all of his commands; then when the kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord and his Christ, we can reign with him, not only for a thousand years, but through all eternity. In that beautiful new earth wherein dwell the righteous.

O, what a change of rulers! The god of this world, who now blinds the minds of those that do not want to see the truth, and his followers will be cast down and take their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone, which will end in the second death. But his saints shall be honored and glorified in that glorious kingdom. Then shall the earth be full of the knowledge of Him as the waters cover the sea. (Isa. 11:9.) But how many will be ready for this good time? And when will it come? Not until Jesus comes in his second advent. O, what a glorious day that will be to those who love the Lord, and have obeyed his word! Oh reader, are you obeying the Gospel of Christ? If so, you have a right to the tree of life. (Rev. 22:14.) It is by obeying the teachings of Christ that will give us a right to enter the coming kingdom. To belong to a popular church, or to believe something because our forefathers believed it, will not do; but every one that comes to the truth, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or of men. He also says, I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life. Now this is so plain that no one need deceive himself, unless through willful ignorance.

As sure as the Lord my God liveth, do not rely on anything short of the blood of Christ, and obedience to his Word. If you do, I fear you will be found wanting when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven. Dear reader, will you not lay up in store for yourself, a good foundation for the time to come, that you may hold on to eternal life? Oh may we not all rejoice in the hope of eternal life, at the coming of the great Life-Giver, Jesus Christ the Captain of our salvation? Oh, may God help you to come to Jesus, and find a refuge now, and a hiding-place from the terrible outburst of vengeance, and then may you and I be made partners of eternal joys in the peaceful glory of the pilgrim's home.

"Prophecy Unto Us Smooth Things."

This has ever been the desire of worldlings and hypocrites. They do not wish to be disturbed, dishonored or disgraced. Whatever iniquities they perpetrate, they wish to keep a smooth outside, and maintain a reputation for respectability and sanctity. But there is no guise in which the devil is more dangerous than when he operates in an angelic form.

To expose the deceptions and reveal the snares of the enemy, the Lord sends his servants like burning and shining lights. He bids them to "cry aloud and spare not;" He demands of them that they be honest, frank, outspoken, and determined in rebuking wrong and exposing evil.

Such men will be hated and traduced by the crafty and designing, but their record is on high and when the Lord appears he will bring their judgement to light. They may labor without thanks or reward in this world, but the Turkish proverb is, "Do good and throw it into the sea, and the fishes will find it."

The world has been greatly benefited by the firm and steadfast testimony of honest and courageous men, who could not be frightened, bought, or silenced, but who have rebuked iniquities, upheld truth, and have sent forth, by voice and pen, the messages of warning and admonition which God in mercy has given to them. Theirs has been no easy lot, but their work has not been in vain, and they shall not lose their reward when He who "came not to send peace on earth, but a sword," shall come again to bring that peace which shall be abiding and eternal.

Eternity is that only thing which is worthy to take up the thoughts of a wise man; that, being added to evil, makes the evil infinitely more tolerable, and being added to good, makes the good infinitely more desirable.—JOSEPH HALL.